



# Instant Adhesive Eye Injury

## Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory Lessons Learned

LL-2006-01

**Concern Statement:** While attempting to apply instant adhesive to a piece of experimental equipment, a researcher was splashed in the face with the product. His eyes were glued shut and he required hospitalization for several days to treat his injury.

**Applicable to:** Employees who work with cyanoacrylate instant adhesives. Trade names include 495 Super Bonder<sup>®</sup> Instant Adhesive, Superglue<sup>®</sup>, and Crazy Glue<sup>®</sup>.

**Incident:** Working alone in a laboratory, a researcher attempted to apply instant adhesive to a piece of experimental equipment. Holding the glue tube at arm's length, and with the tip pointed away from him, he applied pressure to the tube. The tube ruptured and the contents sprayed backwards towards his face. He was not wearing protective eyewear and the adhesive landed on his face and in both eyes, gluing them shut instantly. He made his way to a nearby office to alert a coworker to the emergency. The coworker guided him to an eyewash station, but flushing with water did not help. The researcher was taken by ambulance to a hospital where he was treated for three days. One eye released on its own, while opening of the other eye required physician assistance.



*Instant adhesive commonly used at Berkeley Lab*

**Cause:** Applying pressure to a clogged tube of instant adhesive caused the uncontrolled release of the material. The researcher was not wearing safety glasses with side shields while attempting to dispense the material.

### Recommended Actions

The following recommendations are provided to reduce the chances of a similar exposure in other laboratory operations:

- Wear safety glasses with side shields when handling all hazardous materials, including instant adhesives.
- Previously opened containers of instant adhesive are prone to clogging, and one-time use of the product may minimize the potential for uncontrolled release. However, cyanoacrylate adhesives are regulated as hazardous waste, and must be managed in accordance with PUB-3092, *Guidelines for Generators to Meet HWHF Acceptance Requirements for Hazardous, Radioactive, and Mixed Wastes at Berkeley Lab* (<http://www.lbl.gov/ehs/waste/pub3092/>). Double/Bubble<sup>®</sup> Epoxy is sold in a one-time use packet and may serve as a suitable alternative for some applications. It is available at both Central Stores and ALS Receiving.

### Further Information

Any additional assistance or questions regarding this Lessons Learned may be directed to Jerry Bucher (x7167) or John Seabury (x6547).

For other lessons learned, go to: [http://www.lbl.gov/ehs/html/lessons\\_learned.htm](http://www.lbl.gov/ehs/html/lessons_learned.htm)

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